

# SONIC & KNUCKLES

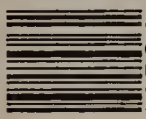


by Michael Teitelbaum

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# SONIC & KNUCKLES™

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**Troll Associates**

*Look for all these great Sonic The Hedgehog adventures.*

**SONIC THE HEDGEHOG**

**SONIC THE HEDGEHOG: ROBOTNIK'S REVENGE**

**SONIC THE HEDGEHOG: FORTRESS OF FEAR**

**SONIC THE HEDGEHOG: FRIEND OR FOE?**

**SONIC & KNUCKLES**

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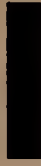
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*This book is dedicated to R.W.*

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# Chapter



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Sonic The Hedgehog sped through the Great Forest of the planet Mobius. As usual, he was out on patrol. *No sign of Swatbots here*, thought Sonic, as he dashed off at Super Sonic Speed toward another section of the forest.

Sonic belonged to a group of Freedom Fighters who lived in a secret underground hideout called Knothole Village. This brave band of friends worked together to free Mobius from the clutches of the evil Dr. Robotnik.

Robotnik had taken control of the planet and kidnapped its good king. Mobius was once a happy, clean, and festive place to live. It was now a

dark, polluted wasteland patrolled by Robotnik's mechanical soldiers, known as Swatbots.

*No Bot-heads here, either*, thought Sonic after he had covered the next section of the forest. *On to the last section.*

Sonic turned, about to run off, when suddenly a wave of dizziness overcame him.

"Wow!" he said, leaning against a tree. "Maybe three chili dogs for breakfast *wasn't* such a great idea!"

From out of nowhere, a mysterious green glow appeared. The brilliant green light spread until it completely surrounded Sonic. "Now I *know* I shouldn't have had those chili dogs!" he said, grabbing the tree for balance.

A vision started to take shape within the green glow. The image of an island appeared before Sonic—an island that was floating in the sky. "Is this weird or what?" Sonic wondered.

The image of the floating island faded from view. The green glow remained. Within the glow another

vision appeared. This time the vision was of a figure with long dreadlocks and huge knuckles.

“Hey, pal!” Sonic called out. “How are you doing? The name’s Sonic. Sonic The Hedgehog. Listen, maybe you can tell me what in Mobius is going on around here!”

The figure said nothing. Then he began to glide, first to the left, and then to the right. He moved faster and more smoothly than anyone Sonic had ever seen.

“Way past cool, buddy,” said Sonic. “You’re almost as fast as I am!”

Then the silent, speedy figure disappeared, leaving only the green glow.

“This is too crazy,” said Sonic. “I’ve got to get back to Knothole Village and tell the others about this.”

Sonic turned to run, but a second wave of dizziness washed over him. He caught hold of another tree to keep from falling. When he looked up, a new vision was forming within the green



glow in front of him. This time the shape was unmistakable.

“Robotnik!” gasped Sonic, when the image had fully formed. *I feel too weak to outrun him*, thought Sonic. *Maybe I can bluff my way through this!*

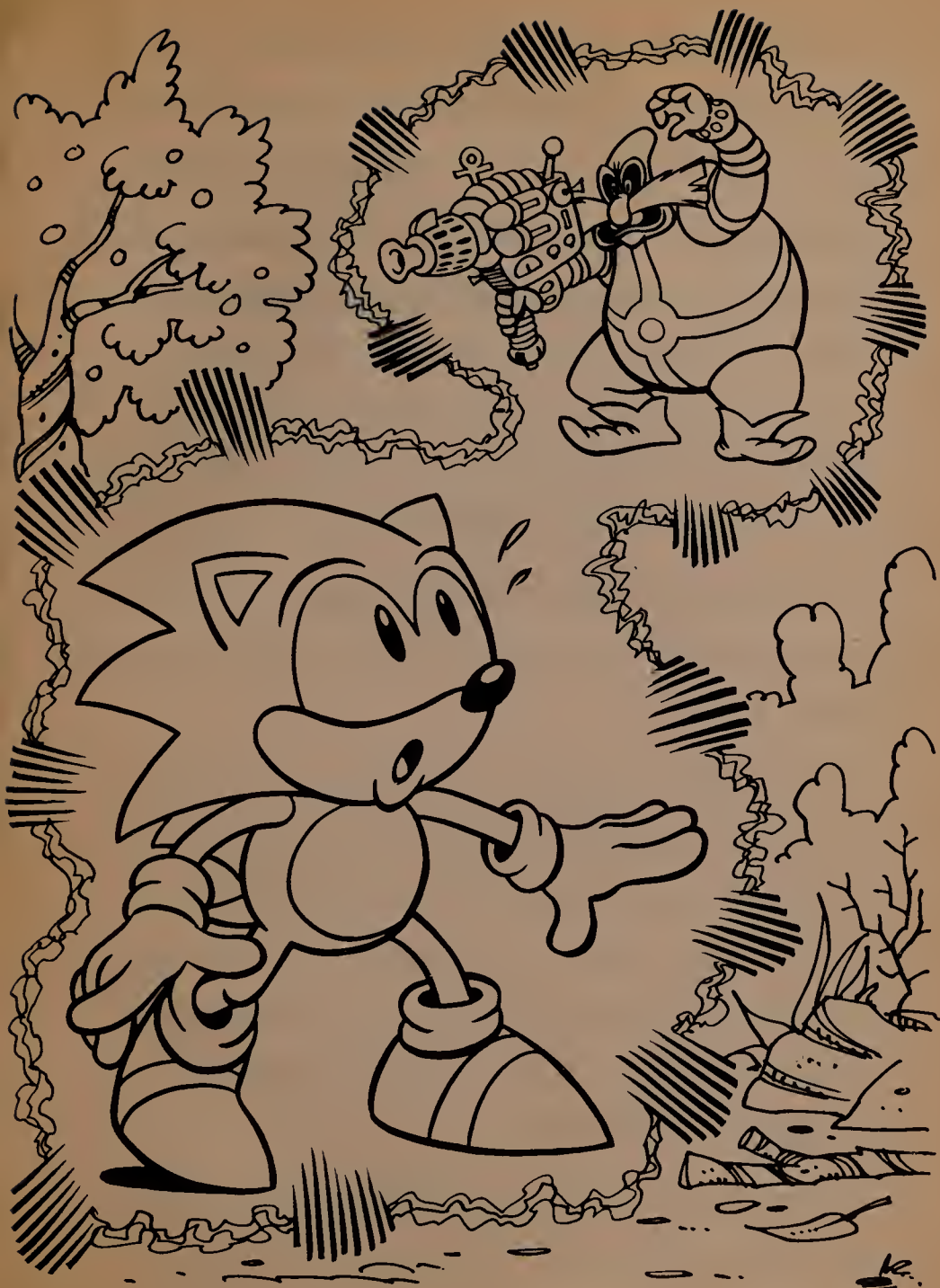
“Hey, Butt-nik!” shouted Sonic, struggling to keep his balance. “You’d better clear out. I’ve got friends all around me. You’re hopelessly outnumbered, you big waste of space, so why don’t you just crawl on back to your fortress!”

The image of Robotnik seemed to not even hear Sonic. Suddenly a huge weapon appeared in Robotnik’s hand. It was unlike any weapon Sonic had ever seen.

*Uh-oh*, thought Sonic. *I think this is big, big trouble. Look at the size of that nasty thing!*

Powerful green beams shot out in all directions from the massive weapon. Sonic dove behind a tree, but Robotnik didn’t seem to notice him. The weapon’s deadly beams didn’t have any effect on Sonic.





“None of this is real!” said Sonic aloud. “These are just images, visions being put into my head. But who is doing this, and what does it mean?”

Sonic gazed at the terrifying vision of Robotnik and his super weapon. Freedom Fighters suddenly rushed at Robotnik from all sides. Some of the Freedom Fighters were Sonic’s friends; others he didn’t know. But none of them stood a chance against Robotnik and his incredibly powerful weapon.

Freedom Fighters fell left and right. The green beams fired so swiftly that no one had any time to think or react.

“This may not be real,” said Sonic to himself, “but it’s still pretty scary! Does a weapon of such tremendous power really exist? I’ve traveled all over Mobius, and I’ve never come across a source of energy great enough to power a weapon like that one. Where is that horrible thing getting its strength from, anyway?”

Almost as if it were answering Sonic’s question, the scene of Robotnik, his weapon, and its terrible destruction disappeared. The green glow that had

been surrounding Sonic got smaller and sharpened into the image of a group of green glowing stones.

The shining gems hovered in the air right in front of Sonic's eyes. Their brilliance was overwhelming.

"Wow!" exclaimed Sonic. "These stones are the most beautiful things I've ever seen!"

They were also the last things that Sonic saw before he passed out and fell to the ground, unconscious.

# Chapter

# 2

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Some distance from the Great Forest of Mobius stood an ugly and dark fortress. This immense structure had once been the palace of the good king of Mobius. From this once-grand palace the good king had ruled kindly and fairly.

But now the fortress was an evil place. Armed Swatbots patrolled the grounds. Hungry crocodiles swam in the moat that surrounded the fortress. Its outer stones were crumbling. It had been years since the building had been repaired. These days, the neglected fortress was the home of Dr. Robotnik, the terrible dictator of Mobius.

Deep within the foul-smelling fortress, Dr. Robotnik paced back and forth in his secret

control room. It was from this room that Robotnik directed the evil operations that kept Mobius in his greedy hands.

As Robotnik paced excitedly, his faithful assistant, Snively, followed him from one end of the room to the other, trying to avoid a collision with his boss. Robotnik was yelling at the top of his lungs, and Snively was trying to figure out what he was shouting about.

“They’re back, Snively!” shouted Robotnik.  
“They’re back in our dimension!”

“Who is, sir?” asked Snively.

“Not *who*, you fool,” snapped Robotnik. “*What!*”

“What, sir?” asked Snively.

“Exactly,” replied Robotnik. “*What*, Snively, *what!*”

“I don’t know, sir,” said Snively sheepishly, seeing that this was leading nowhere. “You said what first.”

“What, first, Snively?” asked Robotnik, getting irritated.





“Sir, what *are* we talking about?” asked Snively, finally.

Robotnik’s face grew serious. His eyes narrowed and his voice lowered to a whisper. “The emeralds, you fool!” he said.

Snively had never seen Robotnik like this. It was as if his boss was talking about the most important thing in the world to him. Snively stood silently and waited for him to go on.

“The Chaos Emeralds, Snively,” Robotnik continued. “They are back!”

“Excuse my supreme ignorance, sir, but what are the Chaos Emeralds?” asked Snively.

“They are beautiful gems,” explained Robotnik. “Mysterious, the stuff of legends. They are also the greatest source of power on Mobius. But they are not really here *on* Mobius. The Chaos Emeralds exist in another dimension. This dimension occupies the same space as Mobius. Every so often the Chaos Emeralds cross over and appear in our dimension, right here inside the Great Forest on our planet.



“The trouble is, Snively, that it is impossible to know when they will appear. The ancient legend says that the emeralds are located on an island floating deep within a parallel dimension. According to the legend, this entire floating island moves back and forth between dimensions, bringing the Chaos Emeralds and their incredible power with it.”

“But how do you know they are back now, sir?” asked Snively, who didn’t know what to make of all this.

“I can feel them, Snively,” replied Robotnik. “I am attuned to their energy. I know that they are back here in our dimension, somewhere in the Great Forest.

“They possess such awesome power that they can change the outcome of history. They can alter the future. If I can get my hands on the Chaos Emeralds, I will be able to construct a weapon so powerful that I could eliminate all opposition to my takeover of Mobius. I could easily wipe out all the so-called Freedom Fighters on Mobius in a

single stroke. And I could put an end to that meddling hedgehog forever!”

Robotnik walked quickly from his control room. “Snively!” he boomed, his voice filling the fortress. “Get me a team of Swatbots. I must go find the Chaos Emeralds!”

# Chapter

# 3

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When Sonic opened his eyes, he found himself lying in his own bed in Knothole Village. He looked up to see the friendly face of Princess Sally leaning over him and smiling with relief.

“Wow, Sal,” said Sonic, sitting up. He still felt a little dizzy from his experience in the Great Forest. “Did I just have the strangest day of all time!”

“Take it easy, Sonic,” said Sally. “You still look a bit shaken.”

Sally was the leader of the Knothole Village Freedom Fighters. She was also a princess. Sally was the daughter of the good king of Mobius, who had been dethroned when Robotnik took control of the planet.

Sonic shook his head and tried to focus his thoughts. “How did I get back to Knothole?” he asked. “When I passed out, I was in the Great Forest.”

Before Sally could answer, a voice called from just outside the room. “Is he awake yet, Sally? Can I come in and see him? Is he okay?” The anxious voice belonged to Tails, the youngest member of the Freedom Fighters. Tails looked up to Sonic like a big brother. He wanted to be just like Sonic when he grew up.

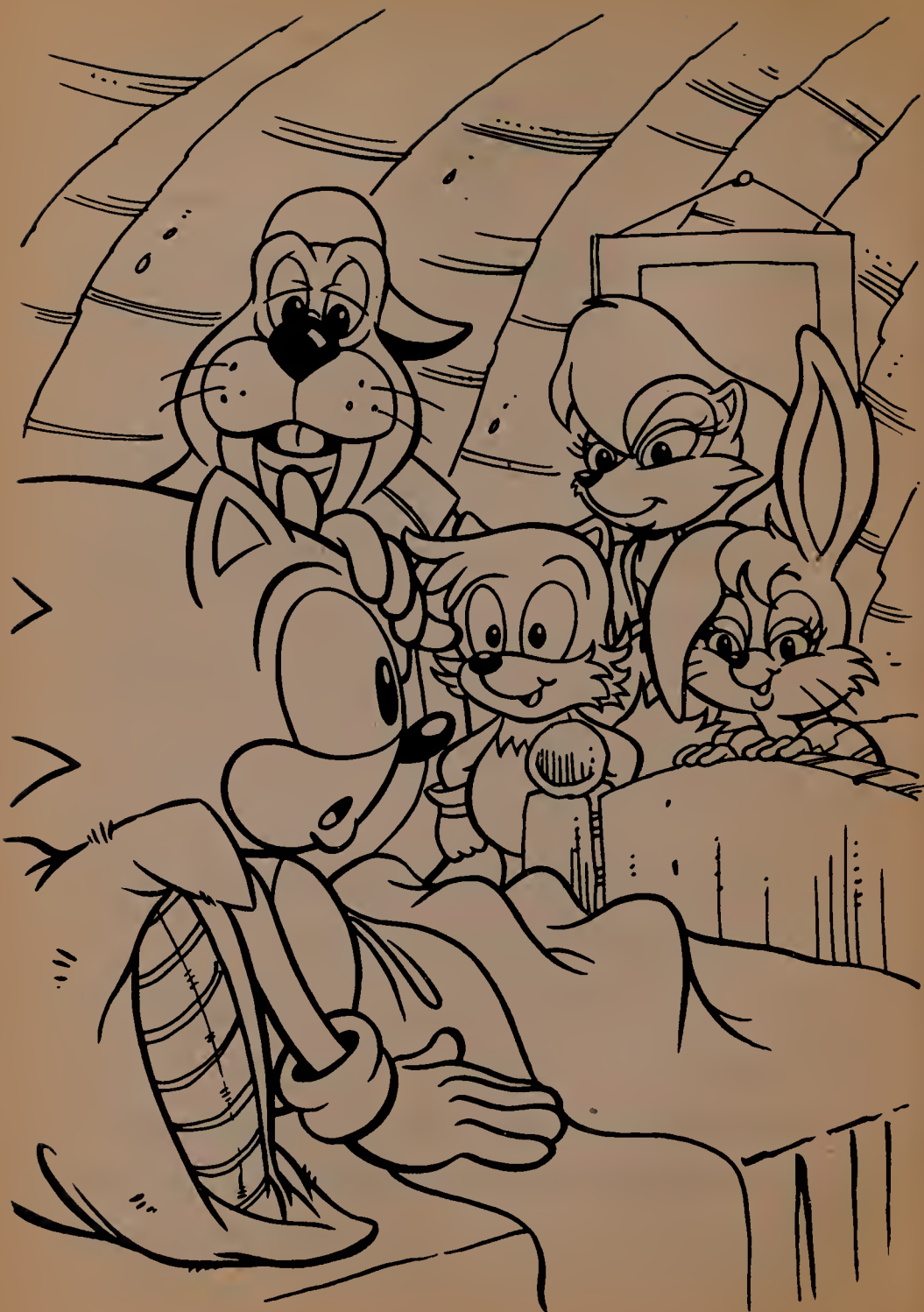
“Of course you can come in, Tails,” said Sally.

Tails ran to Sonic’s side. “How are you feeling, Sonic?” he asked his hero.

“Not too bad, little buddy,” replied Sonic. “But I still don’t know how I got back here.”

“Well,” began Sally. “You actually have Tails to thank for that.”

“I followed you, Sonic, when you went out on patrol,” explained Tails. “Of course, I’m not as fast as you. Nobody is. So I was always a little behind you.



“When I finally caught up with you, you were lying on the ground under a tree. I thought maybe you were taking a nap. But when I tried to wake you, you didn’t get up. That’s when I got a little scared. So I ran back here and got Sally and Rotor and Bunnie. They carried you back to Knothole, and you’ve been sleeping ever since. I hope you’re not mad at me for following you, Sonic.”

“I’m not mad, buddy,” replied Sonic. “I don’t think it’s a great idea for you to follow me out on patrol. But this time I sure am glad you were there!”

Tails beamed with pride.

At that moment, a few more of the Knothole Village Freedom Fighters came into Sonic’s room.

“How are you doing, Sugar?” asked Bunnie Rabbot. Bunnie was half-rabbit, half-robot. Her body, legs, and left arm were mechanical and extremely strong. Her head and right arm were those of a living rabbit. Robotnik had tried to turn Bunnie into a mindless robot slave, but Sonic had rescued her before her whole body had been roboticized.

"I was worried when we found you in the forest," said Rotor the Walrus. Rotor was an inventor. His unique gadgets had saved the Freedom Fighters many times in the past.

"It's fortunate that you survived your little episode," added Antoine. "The princess was quite worried about you." Antoine had been a palace guard when Princess Sally lived with her father at the palace. He had remained her loyal protector now that they were both Freedom Fighters.

"I'm okay, guys," said Sonic. "Thanks for the rescue."

"Can you remember anything about what happened to you in the forest?" asked Sally.

"I was zooming along at my usual world-record speed," began Sonic, "patrolling the final sector of the forest. All of a sudden I got dizzy. Then the whole world turned green. Next, a bunch of weird visions appeared before my eyes."

Sonic went on to describe the floating island, the mysterious gliding figure, and the frightening image of Robotnik and his super weapon.



“Then old Butt-nik faded away, and the green all around me turned into these brilliant green stones,” explained Sonic. “They appeared to be some sort of gems.”

Sally’s face turned pale. “The Chaos Emeralds!” she whispered in a frightened tone that made all the others turn and look at her.

“The whosey whatsis?” asked Sonic.

“There has been a legend on Mobius for many generations about a group of stones known as the Chaos Emeralds,” explained Sally. “They are an incredibly powerful force, and they can affect things at random. Supposedly, almost anything can happen when the Chaos Emeralds are near. It is believed that they appear on Mobius every so often, even though no one has ever actually seen them. The legend states that if an agent of evil were to possess the emeralds, all good on Mobius could be wiped out in a single stroke.”

“Like if Butt-nik got the stones and built that weapon I saw in my vision,” said Sonic. “He was mowing down Freedom Fighters like bowling pins!”

“Exactly,” continued Sally. “The emeralds have the power to affect the future. The visions you saw, Sonic, were *possible* futures. They were things that may or may not happen, depending on whose hands the emeralds fall into. You see, the legend also says that if defenders of good possess the stones, then all evil on Mobius could be eliminated forever.”

“Wow!” all the Freedom Fighters said in hushed tones, as Sally’s words sank in.

As usual, it was Sonic who broke the tense mood. “So what are we waiting for?” he shouted, leaping to his feet. He was obviously feeling much better. “Let’s get off our butts and go find these little green stones. Don’t you hear what you’re saying, Sally? If we can get our hands on the Chaos Emeralds, we could get rid of old Butt-nik once and for all!”

# Chapter

# 4

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Back at Robotnik's fortress, Snively had assembled a team of Swatbots. "Your army awaits you, sir," said Snively.

Robotnik marched out from his fortress to the Swatbots assembled in several waiting hovercraft. "Hold down the fortress, Snively," said Robotnik, chuckling to himself at his little joke. "I'll be back with the Chaos Emeralds!"

Then Robotnik turned to address his robotic soldiers. "We are on a mission of great glory," he began. "If we are successful, it will mean the end of those troublesome Freedom Fighters, and total power for me!"

“We-live-to-serve-the-great-Robotnik!” all the Swatbots replied at once.

“Yes,” said Robotnik with a sly grin. “Of course you do. I programmed you that way.” He got into one of the hovercraft. Then, after a moment’s pause, he shouted, “Forward!”

“Good luck, sir,” said Snively, as the craft all shot into the sky. Then Snively added under his breath, “And bring back an emerald for me!”

Robotnik and the Swatbots made their way over the wasteland the dictator had made of the planet. Robotnik rarely left his fortress. He usually sent out Swatbot teams either by themselves or led by Snively. But the Chaos Emeralds were too important. He knew he had to lead this mission himself.

Robotnik guided the Swatbots deep into the Great Forest. They landed and left the hovercraft so Robotnik could search the area. “I’m not exactly sure what I’m looking for,” he said to himself, “but something tells me that this is where I should be looking.”

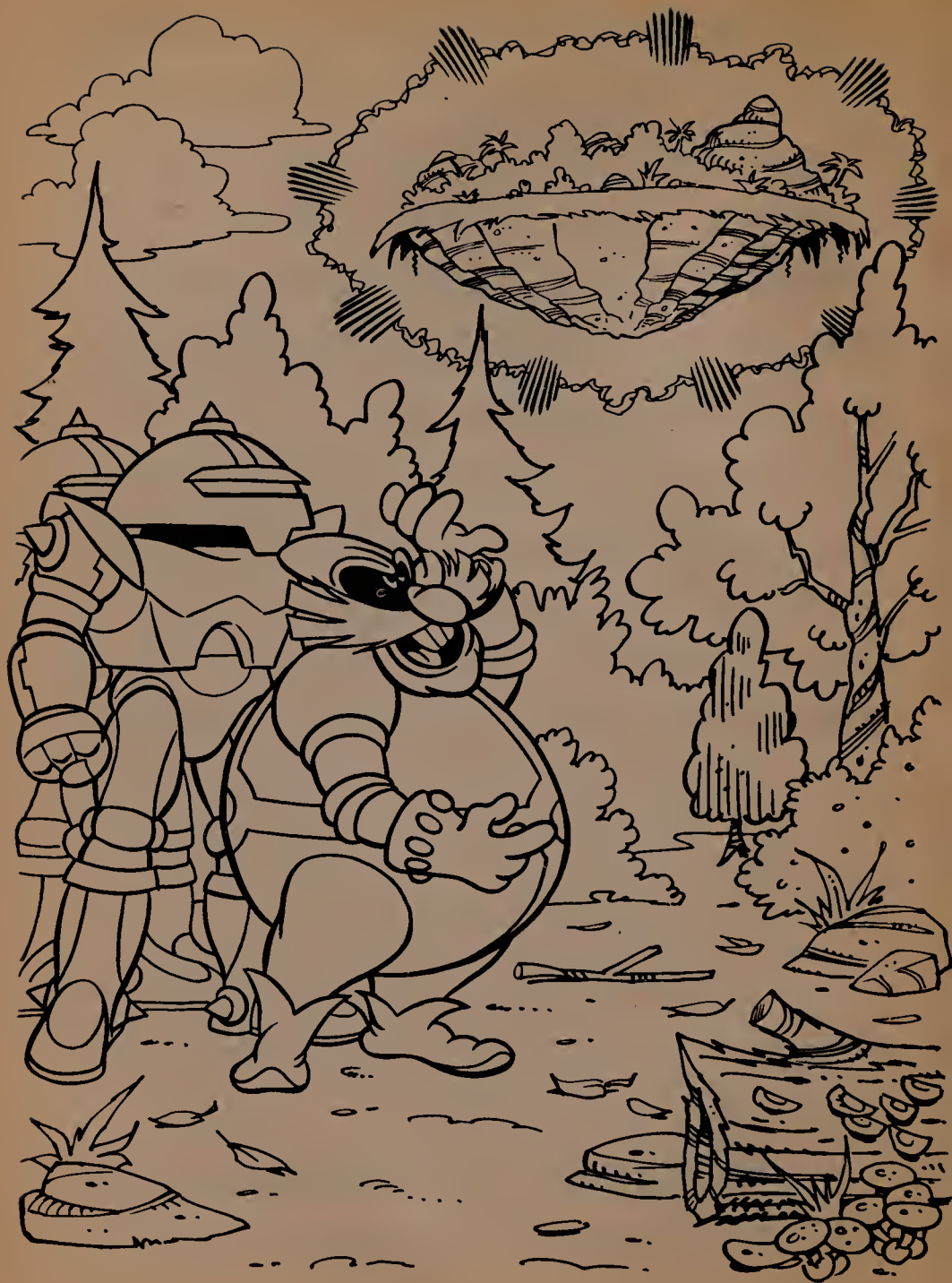
Suddenly the sky turned bright green. Robotnik's eyes were instantly drawn to the brilliant glow. Then, directly above his head, a floating island slowly came into view.

"It's true!" exclaimed Robotnik. "The floating island is real. And what a perfect time it picked to cross over into our dimension!"

Without warning, a beam of green light shot down from the island, surrounding Robotnik and the Swatbots. Robotnik felt as light as a feather as he floated upward. Everything around him turned green, and he felt an excitement that made him sure he was drawing closer to the Chaos Emeralds. Within moments, he and the Swatbots were transported up to the floating island.

The island looked like a jungle paradise. Robotnik saw lush, green plant life. Overhead, brightly colored tropical birds flew through the sky.

"At last," said Robotnik. "I am within reach of the Chaos Emeralds! But where do I look for them?"





Robotnik heard a rustling in the nearby leaves. Then he caught a glimpse of a figure moving very quickly.

“Hello there, sir,” Robotnik called out in his most charming, phony voice. “Is this your island? I’m interested in perhaps working out a deal with you.”

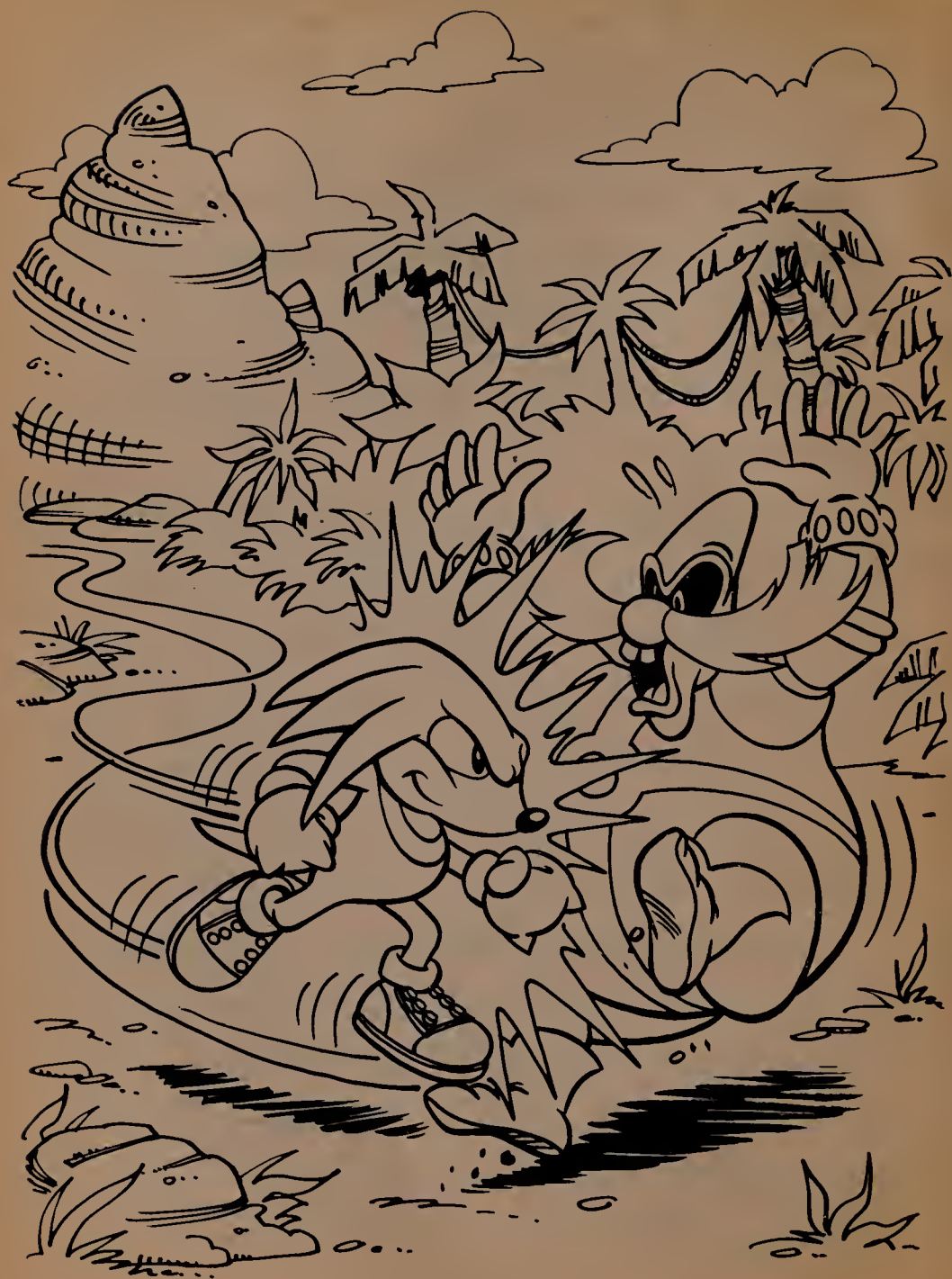
The shadowy figure moved again. Then Robotnik lost sight of it.

“Don’t be afraid, my good fellow,” continued Robotnik. “I’m not here to hurt you. I would just like to discuss a little matter of some jewels.”

The mysterious figure burst from his hiding place in the leaves. He was gliding rather than running. It appeared as if his feet weren’t touching the ground. And he was fast. Very fast.

The speeding figure rammed right into Robotnik, who fell to the ground, stunned by the power of his attacker. Before the Swatbots could react, the swift stranger had destroyed three of the robotic soldiers. He bashed the Swatbots with his huge, powerful knuckles, shattering the robots into pieces.





The remaining Swatbots raised their laser weapons and fired, but the stranger with the big knuckles glided swiftly, dodging each of the shots.

“Swatbots, cease fire!” shouted Robotnik as he struggled to clear his head and pick himself up off the ground. The Swatbots lowered their weapons.

The stranger skidded to a sudden stop inches from Robotnik. The two stood face to face. The stranger raised his enormous fist, and then spoke for the first time.

“You and your metal soldiers have come to steal my emeralds,” said the stranger. “I cannot allow that to happen.”

“No, no, no, no, no!” said Robotnik, flashing his phoniest smile. He put his hand on the stranger’s shoulder. “Why, that thought is the farthest from my mind, Mr. . . .”

“Knuckles,” the stranger replied. “My name is Knuckles.”

“Ah, yes,” continued Robotnik. “Well, Mr. Knuckles, I—”

“No,” interrupted Knuckles. “Not Mr. Knuckles. Just Knuckles.”

“Of course,” said Robotnik. “Knuckles. And allow me to introduce *myself*. I am Good King Robotnik, the kind and caring ruler of the planet Mobius.”

“Mobius?” asked Knuckles.

“Why, yes,” said Robotnik, turning on all of his false charm. “Mobius is this fine planet above which you and your island are floating.”

“Yes,” said Knuckles, beginning to trust Robotnik a bit. “I understand. My island exists in a parallel dimension. Every so often it slips from my dimension into this one, containing your Mobius, as you call it.”

“And what is it that you do here?” asked Robotnik.

“It is my job to protect the Chaos Emeralds,” explained Knuckles. “I know they are on this island, although I’ve never actually seen them. I don’t even know exactly where they are. But it is their power that moves the island back and forth

between dimensions. It is also their power that brought you here from your planet.”

“I see,” said Robotnik. “These emeralds must contain tremendous power to do all that.”

“They do indeed,” replied Knuckles. “And that is why I must protect them. It is up to me to make sure that the emeralds don’t fall into the hands of evil.”

“Of course,” said Robotnik, continuing his lies. “I, too, would hate to see that happen. I am most concerned with taking care of my beloved people on Mobius. I make sure that each and every one of them is happy. And I protect them from evil.

“You see, that is why I would like to share the power of the emeralds with you. If I had the emeralds, I could make sure that no harm ever came to my loyal subjects on Mobius.”

Knuckles thought about all that Robotnik had said. The lying dictator’s sweet-sounding words made sense to him, but something still bothered the guardian of the emeralds.

“If you are a good king,” Knuckles inquired, “then why do you travel with an army of metal soldiers?”

“Ah,” replied Robotnik. “Good question. I bring my army with me for protection.”

“Protection from what?” asked Knuckles.

Robotnik put on his most serious face. “There is an evil one on Mobius,” he began. “One who is committed to overthrowing my kind and generous government. This enemy wants to take over the planet for his own evil purposes.

“You must be on your guard, Knuckles, my friend. This scoundrel and his band of thieves will surely try to steal your emeralds and use them for their own terrible purposes.”

“Who is this enemy who would use the Chaos Emeralds for his own selfish purposes?” asked Knuckles.

“He is known to all on Mobius . . .” said Robotnik, smiling a satisfied smile, “. . . as Sonic the Evil One!”

# Chapter

# 5

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Back in Knothole Village, the Freedom Fighters prepared for their journey.

“Can I go along with you on this mission, Sonic?” asked Tails hopefully.

“Sorry, little guy, not this time,” replied Sonic. “Not after what happened to me out there. This is probably the most dangerous mission I’ve ever been on. Who knows what those weird stones can do?”

“But *you’ll* be okay, won’t you, Sonic?” asked Tails, worrying about his hero.

“Aren’t I always, pal?” answered Sonic. “With my speed and natural coolness, I always land on my fabulously fast feet!”



“Then why don’t you bring your natural coolness and fabulously fast feet over here and help us pack the supplies?” said Antoine. Sonic’s super-cool attitude never failed to irritate Antoine.

As Antoine, Rotor, and Sonic packed up supplies for the mission, Princess Sally studied maps of the Great Forest. Bunnie Rabbot stepped up and looked over Sally’s shoulder,

“What have you got, Sugar?” asked Bunnie.

“This map shows all the trails in the Great Forest,” explained Sally. “There is so much ground to cover, we could be out there for weeks. However, if the emeralds really are from another dimension, it is possible that they always reappear in the same spot on Mobius.”

“What do you mean?” asked Bunnie.

“Well, the two dimensions may exist in the same space,” explained Sally. “As long as the dimensions remain separate, we would never know that the other dimension existed. But the power of the Chaos Emeralds forces their dimension into ours.



I think Sonic just happened to be in the right spot when the other dimension crossed over into ours. If I'm right, the emeralds will always appear in the same place in the Great Forest."

"Sounds to me," said Bunnie, "like we should start our search in the spot where Sonic had his vision."

"It makes sense to me, too, Bunnie," agreed Sally. "It could save us a great deal of time and trouble." Sally packed up her maps. Then she and Bunnie joined the others.

Soon Sally, Sonic, Bunnie, Rotor, and Antoine set off on their mission to find the Chaos Emeralds. Tails remained with the other Freedom Fighters in Knothole Village.

"Good luck, Sonic," said Tails as the group marched off. "And be careful!"

"Not to worry, bud," replied Sonic. "I'm always careful."

Antoine rolled his eyes and let out a sigh.

The Freedom Fighters made their way along the twisting paths that led through the Great Forest.

“Do you remember exactly where you were when the visions came?” Sally asked Sonic.

“I’ll never forget it,” replied Sonic. “It’s about half a day’s hike from here—that is, for you slowpokes who don’t have Super Sonic Speed.”

“Very funny, Sonic,” said Rotor, the slowest of the group. “I may take my time, but I get where I’m going just the same.”

The group followed Sonic through the forest for several hours. Finally they came upon a clearing that was all too familiar to the hedgehog.

“This is it, guys,” said Sonic. “I was leaning against this tree right here when—”

Sonic was cut short by a dazzling green glow that filled the sky.

“Something just like *that* happened!” Sonic finished.

The floating island slowly came into view. It hovered high above the Freedom Fighters.

“Just like in my vision!” exclaimed Sonic. “Only *this* is definitely for real!”



"Then the legends *are* true," said Sally, as she gazed up at the island in amazement. "I believe that the emeralds are somewhere on that island!"

"I'd say you're right, Sal," agreed Sonic. "But how do we get up there to find out?"

Before anyone could answer, Sonic disappeared in a blinding green flash.

"Sonic!" shouted Sally.

"I'll bet he's up on the floating island!" said Rotor.

"But how do we get up there to find him?" asked Bunnie.

The floating island began to fade from sight. Within seconds it was gone, taking Sonic with it.

• • • • •

Sonic saw a second green flash and found himself alone at the edge of a dense jungle. He turned around and realized that he was looking over the rim of the floating island. Far below on Mobius, Sonic could just barely see his friends. "Looks like I'm the only invited guest!" he said to himself.

Sonic made his way into the jungle, moving

toward the center of the island. Suddenly a blurred figure burst from the bushes, gliding at tremendous speed. The figure crashed right into Sonic, knocking the hedgehog to the ground. Sonic looked around. The figure was nowhere to be seen.

“Hey! What’s the big idea?” shouted Sonic, getting to his feet. “I just want to—”

But before Sonic could finish, his attacker burrowed up from the ground. He appeared suddenly in front of Sonic, and then smashed the hedgehog with his huge knuckles. Sonic again fell to the damp jungle floor.

“Now you’re making me mad!” yelled Sonic as he leaped to his feet, ready for the next attack. “Nice way to treat a visitor, buddy!”

The next assault came from behind. The attacker came gliding swiftly, but this time Sonic was ready.

The hedgehog used his great speed to avoid the attacker’s next few glides. Then he launched a Super Sonic Spin and sent his attacker bouncing off.





The attacker had never seen anyone as fast as Sonic, and the Super Sonic Spin left him startled. He had to pause before confronting the hedgehog.

"It is just as the good king said," remarked the attacker. "You, Sonic the Evil One, have come here to steal the Chaos Emeralds and spread your evil all over Mobius."

"Whoa, pal!" said Sonic. "First of all, the name is Sonic The Hedgehog, not Sonic the Evil One. And who is this good king you're talking about?"

"Why, me, of course!" boomed a voice from behind Sonic. Out of the dense brush stepped Robotnik, followed by his army of Swatbots.

"Robotnik, the Good King of Mobius."

"The *what?*" said Sonic, stunned by the sudden appearance of his greatest enemy.

"SWATBOTS!" shouted Robotnik. "Crush the Evil One!"

The Swatbots charged right at Sonic!



# Chapter

# 6

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Below on Mobius, in the Great Forest, Princess Sally and the Freedom Fighters realized they were helpless to find Sonic at the moment.

“I think we should return to Knothole Village and come up with a new plan,” announced Sally. “There’s nothing more we can do here.”

The others agreed. Soon they were hiking back to Knothole Village.

When the Freedom Fighters arrived at Knothole Village, Rotor immediately went into his workshop. No one saw him for many hours.

During this time, Tails questioned the others about Sonic.

“He just disappeared?” Tails asked anxiously.

“We think he’s up on that island from the other dimension,” explained Bunnie. “We’re trying to figure out some way of getting him back.”

“Don’t worry, Tails,” said Sally. “I think Rotor is on to something. He’s been in his workshop for a long time, tinkering away on a new invention. Let’s go see how he’s doing.”

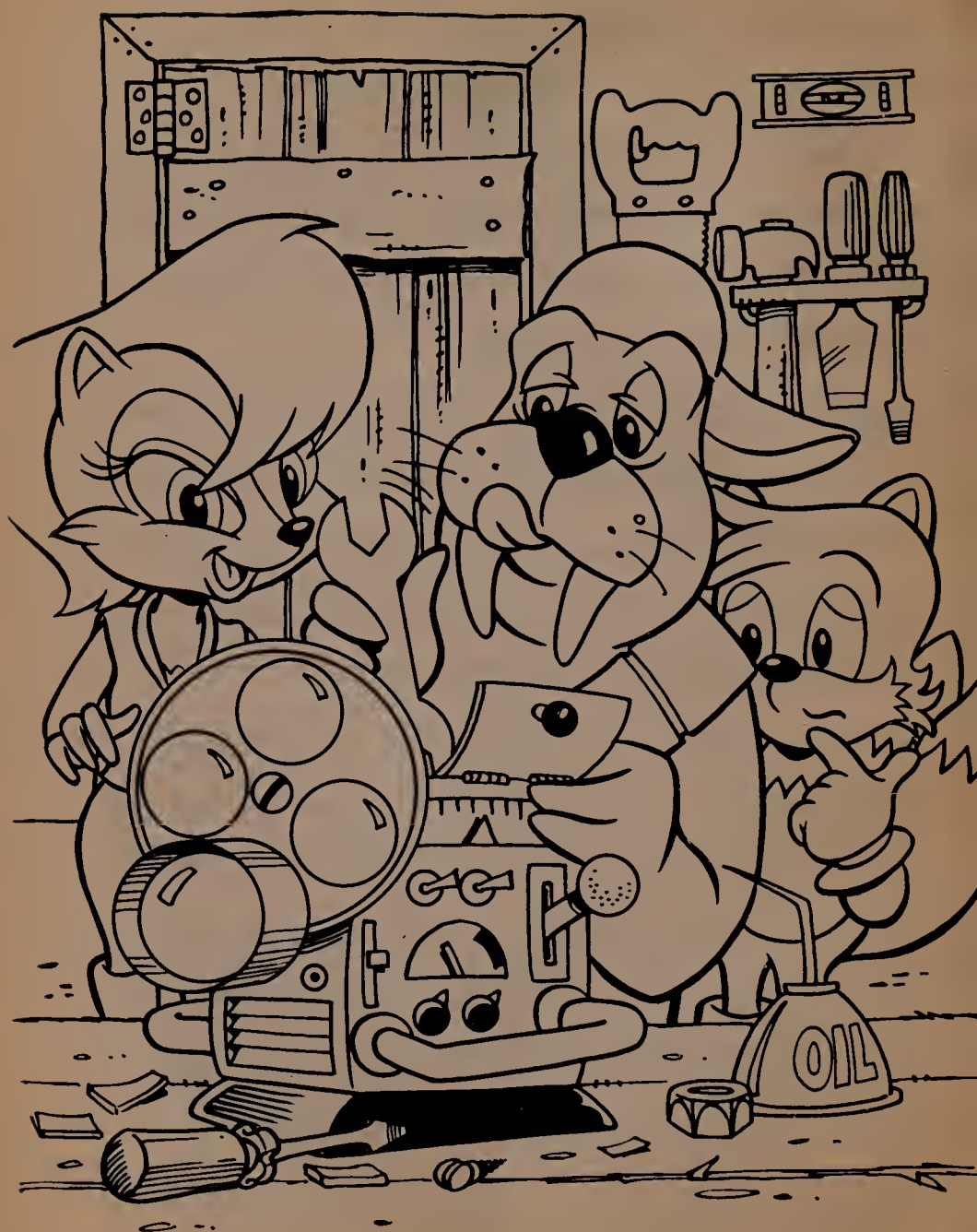
Sally and Tails knocked on the door to Rotor’s workshop. “Come in,” Rotor said from inside.

They found Rotor working on a device that looked like a giant movie projector. It had a huge lens and glass discs of many colors.

“Rotor, Tails is very concerned about Sonic,” explained Sally. “Of course, we all are. We wanted to know what you were working on.”

“Well, Princess,” began Rotor. “I call it a Gem-Color Spectrometer. If I set the color controller for pure white, it will locate diamonds. If I set it for red, it will find rubies. Blue is for sapphires.”

“And green is for emeralds!” exclaimed Sally. “Good work, Rotor! If we can locate the emeralds,



then we can locate the island. Keep at it, Rotor. It's our only hope of finding Sonic!"

• • • • •

Back on the floating island, Sonic had his hands full battling Robotnik's Swatbots. The robotic soldiers fired their weapons at the hedgehog. It took all of Sonic's speed to avoid blast after blast.

Robotnik looked on from a safe distance and laughed.

Knuckles watched, too, thinking about what Sonic had said to him earlier. How could Knuckles be sure that Robotnik was telling him the truth? Maybe Sonic wasn't evil after all. Maybe it was Robotnik who was evil, rather than the kind king he claimed to be. Knuckles simply had no way of knowing for sure.

Sonic zigzagged in between the laser fire, causing some Swatbots to hit others. Two Swatbots went up in flames. "Not too smart, are you, Bot-heads?" said Sonic. "I think it's high time this little party came to an end."

Sonic whipped into a Super Sonic Spin. The jungle leaves flapped from the wind created by Sonic's incredibly fast whirling. One by one, Sonic smashed into the remaining Swatbots, leaving them scattered in pieces around the jungle. As the tide of battle turned in Sonic's favor, Robotnik grew more and more nervous.

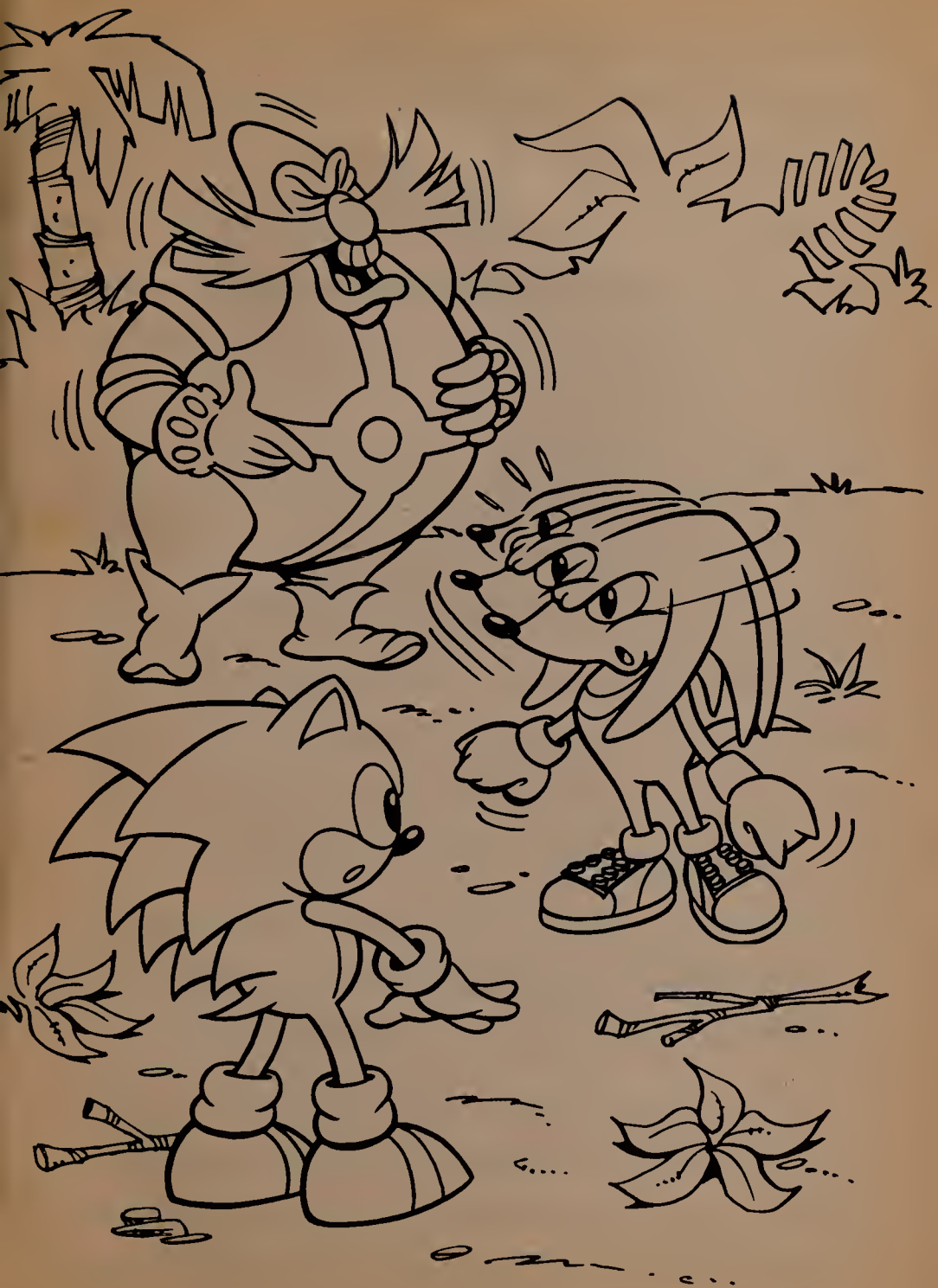
Knuckles was amazed at how quickly Sonic was able to spin. *He obviously did not hit me with his full force when he spun into me earlier*, thought Knuckles. *Then I would have been in bad shape, just like these robots.*

When the last Swatbot had been destroyed, Sonic came to a sudden stop in front of Robotnik and Knuckles. He stared right at Knuckles.

"Look, pal," said Sonic. "I don't know who you are, but you've got this all wrong!"

"My name is Knuckles."

"Well, Knuckles," continued Sonic, pointing at Robotnik. "This guy is *not* the good king of Mobius. In fact he overthrew the good king and made himself the evil dictator of Mobius. And





believe me, things have been pretty bad for the people of Mobius since old Butt-nik here took control of the planet.”

“But then who are you?” asked Knuckles.

“I’m Sonic The Hedgehog. I belong to a team of Freedom Fighters. We are working to rid Mobius of Robotnik and his evil ways. We want to restore the true king of Mobius to his rightful place on the throne. That’s why Robotnik is so anxious to find the Chaos Emeralds. He wants to use them to destroy the Freedom Fighters. We, on the other hand, want to use the emeralds’ power to get rid of Robotnik. We want Mobius to return to the way it once was—a beautiful planet with happy people!”

Knuckles still did not know who to believe.

“Don’t listen to this liar, my friend,” Robotnik said to Knuckles in his most charming voice. “It is *I* who would use the emeralds to rid Mobius of all evil.”

As Knuckles struggled to figure out who was telling the truth, a blinding green flash suddenly filled the jungle. When Knuckles looked up, he was alone. Both Sonic and Robotnik had disappeared!



# Chapter 7

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Sonic opened his eyes and realized he was lying on the ground, face down. He felt as if he had been hit in the head with a large rock. “I’ve got to stop zapping from place to place like this,” he said, getting to his feet. “This can’t be good for my health.”

Sonic looked around and saw he was alone. “Where am I?” he wondered aloud. “I know I’m not on the floating island anymore. This place looks kind of like Mobius, but there’s something strange about it.”

The land all around Sonic was barren and empty—just like the landscape of Mobius—only here a smoky, green mist covered everything.

Even the sun was blocked out of the sky by the mist. It was cold and eerie in this strange place.

Sonic began to walk through the mist, squinting to see where he was going. Up ahead he saw something that appeared to be a body on the ground.

“Hey!” called out Sonic. “Do you need some help?”

As Sonic approached the body, it looked more familiar. He knelt down next to the figure and realized that it was Princess Sally.

“Sally!” he shouted when he recognized her. She didn’t move. Then she disappeared into the mist. “Where did she go?” yelled Sonic. His voice echoed around the bleak landscape.

Sonic took a few more steps forward and came upon the body of Rotor. He, too, faded from sight as Sonic knelt beside him. One by one, Sonic found the lifeless bodies of his fellow Freedom Fighters — Sally and Rotor, then Tails, Bunnie, and Antoine. Each time he reached a body, it faded into the mist.

“What’s going on here?” he shouted.

This time his echoing voice was answered by a familiar, chilling laugh.

“Robotnik!” exclaimed Sonic. “You’re behind all this. Show yourself, you coward!”

Sonic heard a noise behind him. He quickly spun around and found himself face to face with Robotnik. In his hands, Robotnik held the massive weapon that Sonic had seen in his earlier vision—the weapon that meant the end of the Freedom Fighters.

*Wait a minute, thought Sonic. This is exactly what happened in my vision. Sally told me that the Chaos Emeralds can show you what might possibly occur in the future. I think that Robotnik and I have been sent into the future by the emeralds. Not the future that will definitely happen, but the future that might happen. And in this version of the future, Robotnik gets the emeralds, builds his ultimate weapon, and destroys all the Freedom Fighters on Mobius!*

Robotnik pointed his huge weapon at Sonic. “You are the last one, hedgehog,” said Robotnik.

“When I destroy you, all the Freedom Fighters will be gone. There will be no one left to stop me. Mobius will be all mine!”

Robotnik fired the weapon. A tremendous green burst of energy shot straight at Sonic.

Using all of his speed, Sonic zoomed out of the way of the blast just in time. The energy burst opened a huge hole in the ground where Sonic had just been standing. He ran off, hoping to buy some time to think.

“You can run, but you can’t hide from me forever, hedgehog!” shouted Robotnik as Sonic zipped off into the mountains.

Using his Super Sonic Speed, Sonic soon reached the top of the mountain. He paused to catch his breath. “No way old Butt-nik is going to climb all the way up here anytime soon,” he said to himself. “I’ve got to think. Got to sort all this out. I know that this is only one possible way the future might go. It doesn’t have to be this way. I’ve got to find a way to stop Robotnik from getting the emeralds and making his

weapon, so this version of the future never actually happens!” .

Suddenly the Chaos Emeralds themselves seemed to appear before Sonic's eyes. They floated in space only inches from his grasp.

“The emeralds!” exclaimed Sonic. “I have them!” He stepped forward to grab the shimmering jewels, but they turned out to be only an illusion. Sonic's hand went right through the vision of the emeralds.

Before he realized what had happened, it was too late. Sonic stepped off the edge of the mountain, reaching out and clutching nothing but air.

Sonic fell down the side of the mountain, bouncing and rolling out of control. He finally reached the bottom, battered, bruised, and completely drained of strength.

Sonic struggled to lift his head off the ground. When he looked up, he saw that he was lying at Robotnik's feet. Robotnik stood over him, pointing his powerful weapon right at Sonic's head!

# Chapter

# 8

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Back in the present, the Freedom Fighters had no idea that Sonic and Robotnik had been sent into the future. Rotor had finally finished his Gem-Color Spectrometer.

The Freedom Fighters gathered just outside the entrance to Knothole Village. Bunnie helped Rotor carry his device to a clearing in the Great Forest. Sally, Antoine, and Tails followed close behind.

“I need a clear opening to the sky to test my Spectrometer,” explained Rotor.

“I just hope it helps us find the Chaos Emeralds,” said Sally. “And Sonic.”

“The light beam should be able to cross over into the other dimension,” said Rotor.



“We’ve just got to find Sonic!” said Tails anxiously.

“Okay, Rotor,” said Sally. “Let’s see what this thing can do.”

Rotor aimed the Gem-Color Spectrometer at the sky. He focused its long lens, set the color selection to emerald green, and turned on the device.

A wide band of green light shot from the lens, reaching high into the sky. The band widened as it searched for emeralds.

“Looks like it’s working, Princess,” said Rotor.

“Nice job, as usual, Rotor,” said Sally. “Okay guys, let’s get on the move.”

Rotor packed up the device and the Freedom Fighters hurried back through the Great Forest to the spot where they last saw the floating island.

Rotor reset the device and shot the wide green band of light into the sky. Slowly, the floating island came back into view. Rotor’s beam washed the island in a green glow.

“Well, the device helped bring back the floating

island,” said Sally. “I only hope it’s doing Sonic some good!”

• • • • •

Meanwhile, Sonic and Robotnik were still trapped in the future—a future that looked bleak for Mobius and, at the moment, even worse for Sonic.

Robotnik aimed his emerald-powered weapon at Sonic, who crawled helplessly along on the ground, injured from his fall down the mountain. Robotnik stood over him, enjoying his moment of triumph.

“So this is how it ends, hedgehog!” cackled Robotnik. “I fire this weapon and rid myself of the last Freedom Fighter on Mobius. How nice that it’s you. You’ve always been a meddling pest. And now your time is up!”

Suddenly Rotor’s band of green light broke through the thick mist that filled the air.

“What is this?” shouted Robotnik.

The mist faded, and Sonic and Robotnik were surrounded by the light. In a blinding flash, Sonic and Robotnik were sent from the future back to the present. They reappeared on the floating

island, right next to Knuckles, who was stunned by their sudden return.

“We’re back in the present!” exclaimed Sonic.

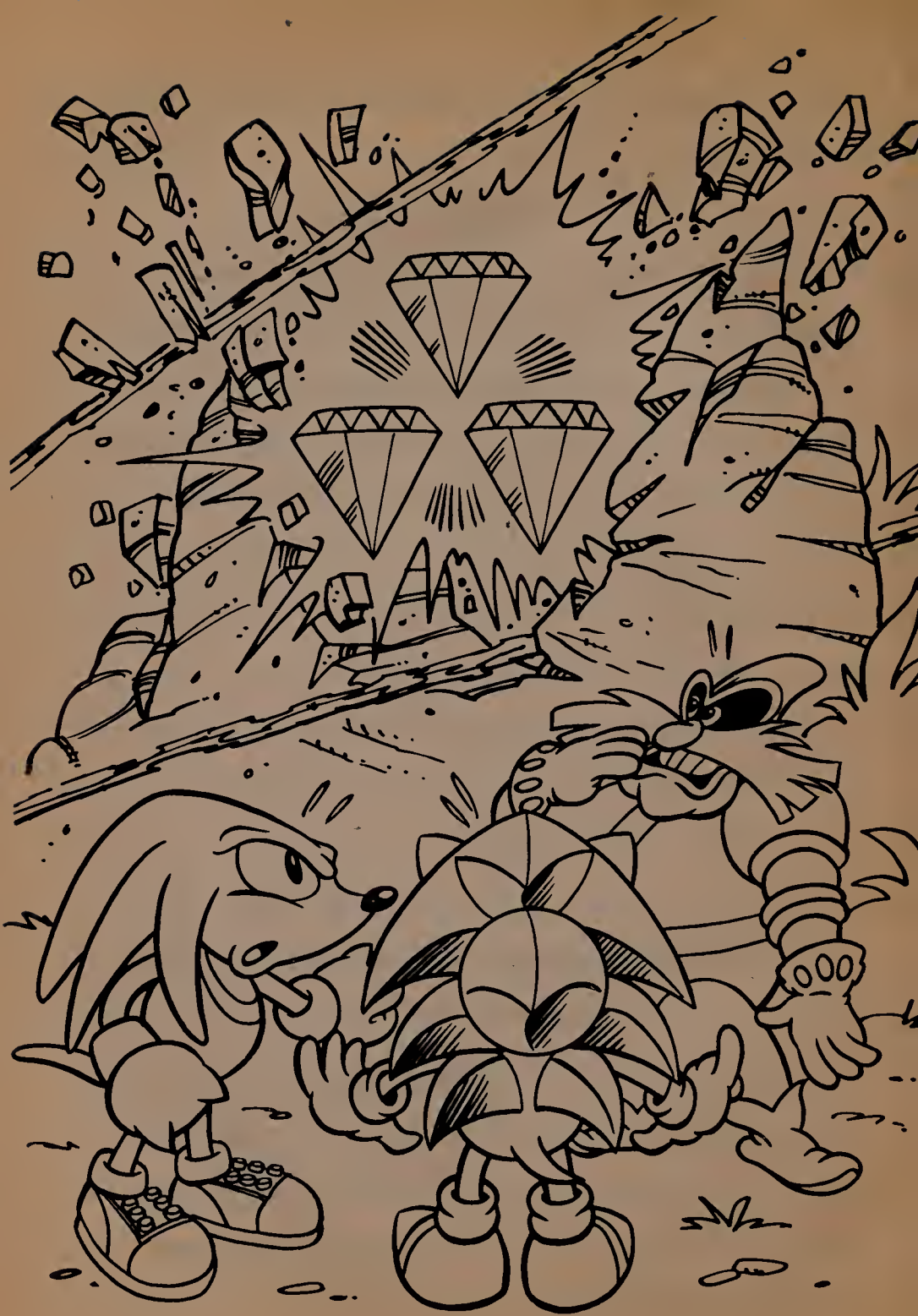
“And that means that the terrible future in which Robotnik gets the emeralds doesn’t have to happen.”

Without warning, the wide band of green light sliced up through the center of the island, streaked past them, and struck a huge wall of rock. An opening appeared in the wall. The opening contained the Chaos Emeralds. Rotor’s device had finally located the precious gems!

Knuckles was stunned. His life centered around the Chaos Emeralds, yet he had never actually seen them . . . until now.

The sight of the emeralds filled Robotnik with greed. His mind emptied of all thoughts except to get his hands on the gems.

Robotnik rushed toward the emeralds, shouting, “I must have them! The emeralds! They’re mine! They’re all mine! And I’m not sharing them with anyone! Now I can crush the Freedom Fighters and rule Mobius forever!”



Knuckles moved swiftly. Before Robotnik could reach the emeralds, Knuckles glided into him at full speed, knocking him to the ground.

"I guess you've revealed your true colors, Robotnik," said Knuckles. "And you're not getting near the emeralds." Then Knuckles turned to Sonic. "I'm sorry I doubted you, Sonic," he added. "I know now that you were telling the truth."

Suddenly a great rumbling came from the emeralds. The island began to shake and shift as the mystic gems sent out a power surge of enormous strength. Down below, the Gem-Color Spectrometer could not absorb the energy that traveled along the length of its beam. With a shower of sparks, it went dead.

The ground now tilted crazily, sending Knuckles, Sonic, and Robotnik flying off the edge of the island. They fell toward Mobius below, where the Freedom Fighters were waiting. Overhead, the floating island disappeared.

Sonic landed first. Knuckles landed on top of him, and Robotnik crashed down on top of

Knuckles. Robotnik scrambled to his feet, unharmed. Knuckles, too, was unhurt. But Sonic was sprawled on the ground, unconscious.

“Sonic!” yelled Sally. “He’s hurt!” The Freedom Fighters rushed over.

As Knuckles knelt over Sonic, Robotnik quietly slipped away. He realized he was outnumbered. He would continue the fight another day.

After a few minutes, Sonic began to stir. “Oh, my head,” he moaned as he sat up.

“Are you all right?” asked Bunnie.

“Yeah, I’ll be fine,” replied Sonic. “Are you okay, Knuckles?”

Knuckles nodded. “But where’s Robotnik?” he asked.

The Freedom Fighters looked around and noticed that Robotnik was gone.

“I guess old Butt-nik crawled away like the snake he is,” said Sonic, trying to clear his head.

“At least he didn’t get the emeralds,” added Knuckles.





"It's good to see you're all right, Sonic," said Sally.

"Yeah," said Tails. "We were all worried."

"Once again, Rotor came through for us," explained Bunnie.

"Thanks, buddy," Sonic said to Rotor. "Oh, hey, everybody, this is my new friend, Knuckles."

Sonic introduced the Freedom Fighters to Knuckles.

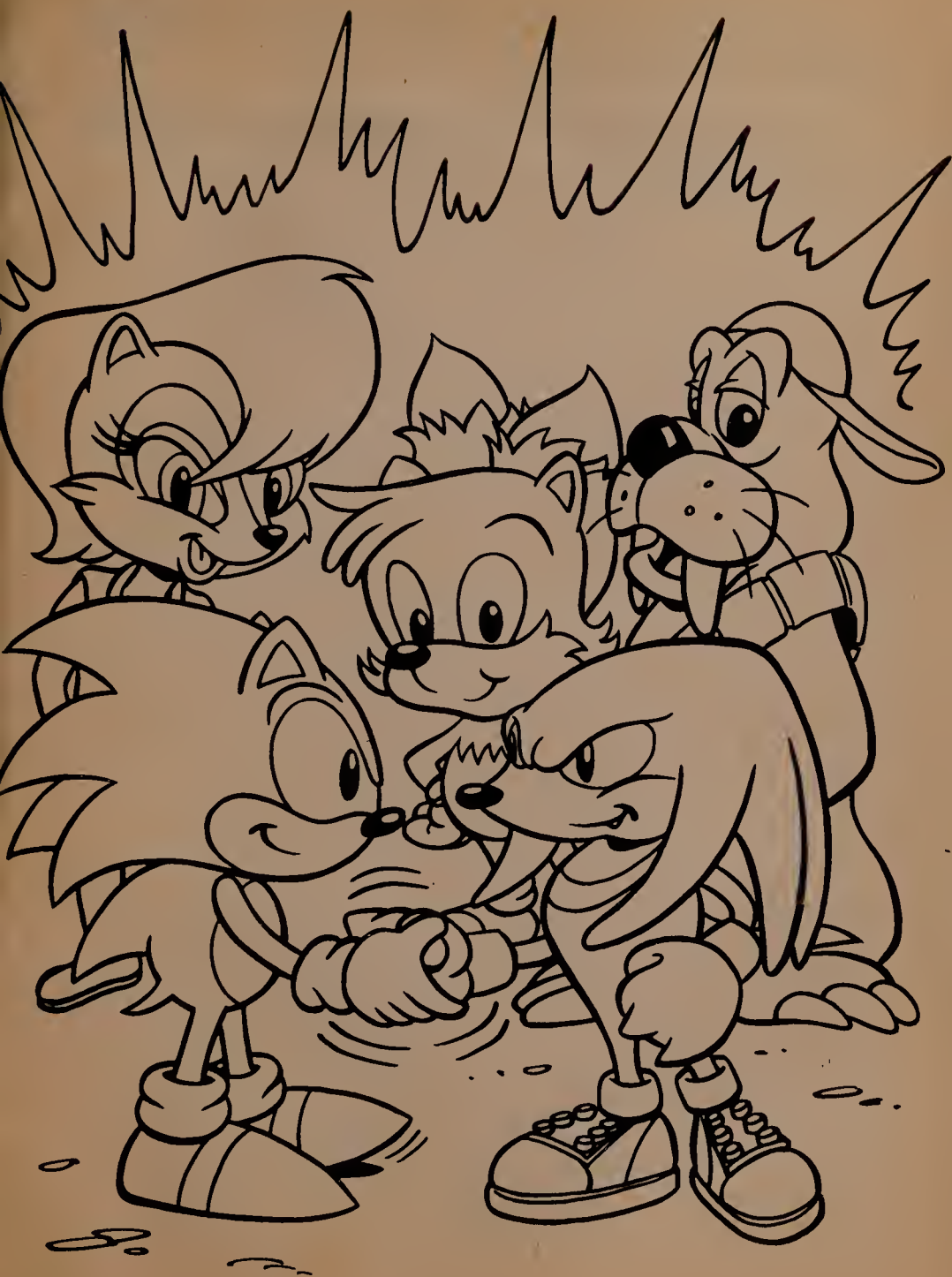
"I guess I'm stuck in your dimension," said Knuckles sadly. "But perhaps someday I will be able to return to my island. I only hope I get back there before Robotnik finds the emeralds."

"Why don't you stay with us in Knothole Village?" offered Sally.

"Yeah," said Sonic. "We'll help you get back home."

"And when I do," said Knuckles, "I will help you use the Chaos Emeralds to rid your planet of Robotnik."

"The emeralds could mean so much to us," said Sally. "They could change the entire future of Mobius."



“Let’s hope it’s a better future than the one I had a peek at,” said Sonic.

Everyone agreed. And they returned to Knothole Village together.



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# Beware the Chaos Emeralds!



Whoever finds the magical emeralds can control Mobius once and for all. So, naturally, the evil Dr. Robotnik wants to steal them.

The precious stones have a guardian – a mysterious creature named Knuckles. But Robotnik has just tricked Knuckles into believing that *Sonic The Hedgehog* wants to steal the emeralds for himself.

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